standing, anymore than the difference of sounds can be brought under the discernment of the eye, or the difference of colours under that of the ear. Should the objector become proud and presumptuous, and insist on our yielding to his demand, we ask him to begin with demonstrating the axiomatic principles on which reason proceeds: and when he has done so, he may be the better prepared to try his skill upon an analysis of ethical law, or rather, after having made the attempt and failed, he will the more readily acknowledge that there may be moral principles, the existence of which reason may discover, but cannot possibly explain.

Call them by what name you please, you come back in all Inquiry after truth to principles which reason cannot demonstrate, but on which, on the contrary, all reasoning proceeds. To deny this is to involve ourselves in the absurdity of an infinite series of proofs, each hanging on the other, with nothing to support them or on which to rest, or In a circle of proof in which there is connexion, but no origin or foundation, and no progress. In like manner, in the inquiry into virtue and vice, we come back to ultimate principles, on which all morality rests. Just as the former class of principles are anterior in the order of things to all exercise of the reasoning faculties, so the latter are anterior to every given exercise of the conscience.

To justify any given proposition to the reason, we have only to show how it is built on the fundamental principles of reason. This being done, reason makes no farther inquiry—It is now completely satisfied. The scepticism which insists on something farther is not sanctioned by reason, but rather requires to set itself against reason, and reason in all its acts condemns it. In like manner, the mind is satisfied when you have shown that an action is reconcilable with the fundamental principles of morality. When this is done, it asks no more questions. If farther in-

quiries are made, it does not beat responsive to them—indeed, it cannot so much as comprehend them.

While the intellect and its fundamental principles, and the conscience with its fundamental principles, are in many respects analogous to, yet they are at the same time independent of, one another. The understanding does not feel that it is called to justify itself to the conscience, nor is the conscience required to justify itself to the understanding. Each has its own assigned